

## **Introduction**

The mission of the State Center for Health Statistics, Louisiana Office of Public Health, is to collect and distribute accurate, understandable information vital to informed decision making on matters concerning individual and community health. The *1998 Louisiana Vital Statistics Overview* has been designed to make the most requested vital statistics data accessible to the public as soon as the information becomes available. Analysis has been kept brief to allow for quick dissemination of the data. For a more in-depth analysis of vital events in Louisiana, please refer to the *1998 Louisiana Vital Statistics Report* to be published later in the year.

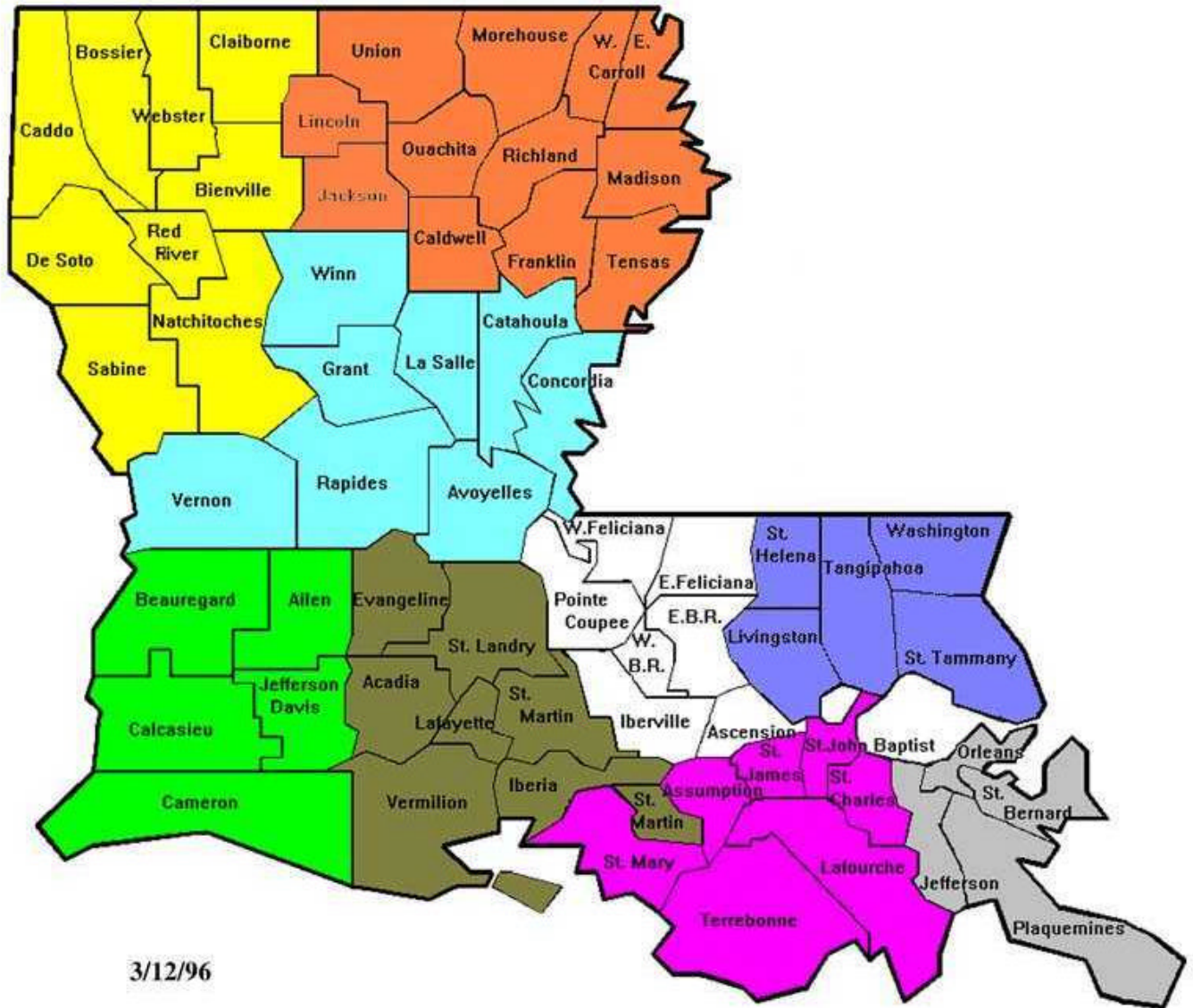
The *1998 Louisiana Vital Statistics Overview* describes health status data collected on Louisiana's vital event certificates of Live Birth, Spontaneous Fetal Death (stillbirth), Induced Termination of Pregnancy (induced abortion), Death, Marriage, and Divorce. Data collected on these certificates are used to describe trends and current status in infant and maternal health and in the causes of death most prevalent in race, gender, and age groups. This basic surveillance of vital events is essential in identifying individual and community health concerns and in targeting and evaluating health education and service efforts.

The *Overview* contains seven chapters that describe vital event data and one chapter that presents supplemental information on methodology. The seven data chapters of the *Overview* are "Population," "Live Births," "Fetal Deaths," "Abortions," "Deaths," "Infant Mortality," and "Marriage and Divorce." Each of these chapters contains text, tables, and charts describing state-level data. Most of these chapters also contain tables describing vital events in Louisiana's sixty-four parishes. The final chapter, "Technical Notes," identifies data sources, describes data processing methods and assumptions, and provides a glossary of technical terms.



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## **Summary of Vital Events**

### **Population**

The total state population in 1998 was 4,368,967.

### **Live Births**

The total number of live births to state residents in 1998 was 66,773. The birth rate was 15.3 live births per 1,000 population.

### **Teen Births**

There were 12,294 live births to teens (women less than 20) in 1998.

### **Unmarried Mothers**

There were 29,940 live births to unmarried women in 1998. This figure represents 44.8% of all 1998 live births.

### **Prenatal Care**

Of the 66,505 live births with known timing of entry into prenatal care in 1998, 82.3% received prenatal care in the first trimester.

### **Low Birthweight**

In 1998, 6,768 (10.1% of total live births with known birthweight) weighed less than 2500 grams.

### **Fetal Deaths**

In 1998, 525 fetal deaths were reported.

### **Abortions**

There were 11,351 induced terminations of pregnancy reported in Louisiana in 1998.

### **Deaths**

In 1998, 40,209 Louisiana residents died. Louisiana's crude death rate was 920.3 per 100,000 population.

### **Infant Deaths**

In 1998, 606 infants under the age of one died. The infant mortality rate for Louisiana was 9.1 per 1,000 live births.

### **Marriage and Divorce**

In 1998, 39,544 marriages occurred in Louisiana. The marriage rate was 9.1 marriages per 1,000 population. There were 12,526 divorces reported from the 46 of the state's parishes that reported.

